



SEAPORT

NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO: CLEARWATER, IDAHO, LATAH, LEWIS, & NEZ PERCE COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Seaport's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased in September to 3.9 percent from August's rate of 3.7 percent, as shown in Seaport Table 1. In September 2000, the rate was 4.9 percent. Total employment decreased in September by 350 month-over-month, which follows seasonal trends. Employment usually decreases in September because of a break between hiring seasons for recreation/agriculture and the winter hiring season for the holidays. However, compared to the same time last year, employment increased by 840.

In September, Seaport's *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 260 from August 2001, and 430 from September 2000. September's increase month-over-month was due to normal seasonal fluctuation in *Government Education*. *Education* increases in September because of the return of school staffs to classrooms after the summer break. *Services* continued monthly gains in September, mainly in the *Health Care* sector. *Services* increased by 360 jobs year-over-year. It should be noted that September's numbers are preliminary. September labor force and *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* data will be revised, as more data is available. In light of the September 11 events, revisions to September numbers may be significant.

SPECIAL TOPIC

Lumber production slips

Lumber production in nearly every western state declined modestly last year due to a slowing in the U.S. housing market, according to final 2000 state totals published by Western Wood Products Association (WWPA). Information is based on the association's annual survey of nearly 300 mills in 12 western states and Alaska. Production and estimated wholesale value for Idaho was 1.9 billion board feet. Overall, western lumber production in 2000 totaled 17.18 billion board feet, down 2 percent from 1999; however, it was the second highest annual production volume since 1992. Estimated wholesale value of western lumber was \$6.15 billion, compared to \$7.37 billion in 1999

Seaport Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Nez Perce County, Idaho, and Asotin County, Washington

	Sept 2001*	August 2001	Sept 2000	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	34,460	34,750	33,950	-0.8	1.5
Unemployment	1,330	1,270	1,660	4.7	-19.9
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.9%	3.7%	4.9%		
Total Employment	33,130	33,480	32,290	-1.0	2.6
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	34,050	34,510	33,520	-1.3	1.6
Unemployment	1,010	1,070	1,250	-5.6	-19.2
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.0%	3.1%	3.7%		
Total Employment	33,042	33,440	32,270	-1.2	2.4
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**	25,690	25,430	25,260	1.0	1.7
Goods-Producing Industries	5,290	5,310	5,090	-0.4	3.9
Mining & Construction	1,460	1,470	1,270	-0.7	15.0
Manufacturing	3,830	3,840	3,830	-0.3	0.0
Food Processing	120	80	120	50.0	0.0
Lumber & Wood Products	710	730	720	-2.7	-1.4
Paper Products	1,690	1,700	1,740	-0.6	-2.9
All Other Manufacturing	1,310	1,330	1,250	-1.5	4.8
Service-Producing Industries	20,400	20,120	20,170	1.4	1.1
Transportation	1,340	1,330	1,350	0.8	-0.7
Communications & Utilities	300	290	280	3.4	7.1
Wholesale Trade	940	940	990	0.0	-5.1
Retail Trade	5,090	5,170	5,210	-1.5	-2.3
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,370	1,370	1,390	0.0	-1.4
Services	7,280	7,200	6,920	1.1	5.2
Government Administration	1,810	1,930	1,810	-6.2	0.0
Government Education	2,270	1,890	2,220	20.1	2.3
*Preliminary Estimate					
**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month					

and \$6.11 billion in 1998.

After reaching a record 54.3 billion board feet in 1999, U.S. consumption dipped slightly in 2000 to 53.9 billion board feet. A 4.4 percent decline in the number of new homes accounted for much of the decrease in lumber consumption. Housing starts totaled 1.57 million units in 2000, down from 1.64 million in 1999. Single-family housing, the largest market for lumber, declined 5.5 percent to 1.23 million units in 2000. Each new single-family home uses an average of 14,175 board feet of softwood lumber. It is expected that decreases will continue in 2001. Collateral damage from the decreases has affected business in North Central Idaho as several lumberyards and sawmills have cut payroll. One lumberyard in Clarkston, Washington, closed.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Idaho & Lewis Counties

- Nine organizations in Idaho County will be receiving nearly \$500,000 in community facility grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's

Rural Development project. Overall, nearly \$1.34 million was awarded for 24 projects in rural Idaho. Grant awards are as follows: a library expansion project (\$138,057) and a new public safety building (\$75,000) in Kamiah; completion of construction on a fire station building (\$18,000) and a library (\$10,000) in Koo-skia; remodeling of the library (\$9,625) and city hall (\$106,800) in Riggins; construction of a storage building for Tahoe Community First Responders in Koo-skia (\$26,538); and construction of new fire stations for Salmon River Rural Fire Department (\$89,300). In many cases, these grant funds are only part of the whole funding picture to be used to complete these projects, according to spokesman Dan Fraser, USDA Rural Development.

- King's Discount opened a Grangeville store in October. Business was brisk during the grand opening. "We were swamped all day long," said store manager Brad Olson. "I think the community accepted us well and were happy with what they saw." The new 14,000-square-foot store is located on the corner of E Street. King's operates 33 stores in the intermountain Northwest, and sells a range of products such as toys, clothing, hardware, and kitchen appliances.

Latah County

- Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories (SEL) in Pullman plans to spend the next 19 months researching ways to improve security and survivability of the power grid with the help of a \$775,000 grant from the National Institute of Standards and Technology, a sub-branch of the U.S. Department of Commerce. The project will include developing software equipment that is more sabotage resistant. Software equipment controls the majority of automation and communication of electric power stations. "We're saying the same thing post-September 11 that we did pre-September 11—that we're in the business of protecting the electrical power system," said Susan Fagan, director of public affairs at SEL. The University of Idaho and Washington State University will participate in the program.

Nez Perce & Asotin Counties

- Lumberman's, a Clarkston lumberyard that has been in business since 1981, is closing. "We have made several changes in the last year, including management changes, in an attempt to get the right formula. Regardless of what we did, the market didn't allow us to continue," said company officials. Asotin County's housing starts peaked at 102 in 1994 then dropped to 42 last year, contributing to the company's decision to close the lumberyard. The store's 17 full-time employees have been invited to apply for openings at any of the other 50 Lumberman's stores in Idaho, Washington, Oregon, and Arizona. The closest is in Spokane and Walla Walla, but there also are locations in Boise and Ontario, Oregon. Lumbermen's executives made

the decision about the Clarkston store before the World Trade Center attacks but didn't announce it until October. The Kamiah Lumberman's closed early this spring and then re-opened as Jacobs Lumber under different ownership.

- Spatial Dynamics, located at the Port of Wilma northwest of Clarkston, has entered into a partnership with OB One Global Limited, of Tukwila, Washington, to market People Portal II. The People Portal II is designed to prescreen airline passengers for nonmetal objects at a much faster rate than conventional airport detectors. The scanner recognizes all objects on people that aren't a part of their bodies and highlights those objects in red. Operators view a wire frame diagram on a computer screen of each individual. Unlike competing technologies, People Portal II doesn't show revealing, photographic images of individuals. Since September 11 Spatial Dynamics has received many inquiries from airports all over the world resulting in plans to move the product from the prototype to manufacturing stage.
- Safeway has applied for a building permit at the new Bedrock Plaza site on Thain Road in Lewiston. According to the permit, the store will be 58,000-square feet and is the largest style of store that the company builds. It will include a pharmacy, deli, and floral department, and a China Express, which is a fast food operation. Plans call for a "future tenant coffee shop," as well. The new store will face the new Home Depot, and backs up against Nez Perce Drive.
- Deranleau's, a long time business in Lewiston, is planning to build a new 18,000-square-foot store at 1901 19th Avenue, across from the Lewiston Center Mall. For many years, the appliance and home electronics store has been a fixture near the bottom of 21st Street. The business will relocate to the new 90-by-200-foot structure by next year. About 40 percent of the new space will be a showroom, and 60 percent will be used as a warehouse.
- Starbucks, the largest retailer of specialty coffee in the world, recently opened a store at 1325 21st Street in a new Lewiston strip mall. The new coffee house sells drip coffee, espresso, tea, pastries, whole bean coffee, and brewing equipment. Customers also can make their purchases at a drive-through window. The new business employs 13 workers.
- Lisa's Learning Center at 840 Main Street in Lewiston opened in October. The new store features hard-to-find learning toys, and also carries home-schooling supplies and materials for teachers.

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